

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, June 21, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Chair Erickson, Duane Pierce, Ed Koslowski, Jim Haskins, Joe Witkowski, Jerry Polus

EXCUSED: Delores Pierce, Tracy Rosinski, Carl Soderberg

****Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1730**

1. **Call Meeting to Order.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 4:30 pm.

2. **Invocation.**

3. **Approve/Modify Agenda.**

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Duane Pierce to modify the agenda to take Item 6 following Item 3. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. **Approve/Modify Minutes of May 17, 2016.**

It was noted in Item 9 of the May 17, 2016 minutes that the motion was made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Jim Haskins (not Pierce).

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Joe Witkowski to approve as corrected. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. **Communication from Supervisor Schadewald re: This letter is my request for consideration of either temporary and/or permanent artwork to be displayed outside of the Veterans' Memorial Arena. My hope is that local artists can submit appropriate artwork for consideration to display.**

Polus said he read this with interest and noted that the veterans' memorial is managed by a group through the Village of Ashwaubenon. Erickson did not think this should have been referred to this subcommittee. This communication will also go to the Education and Recreation Committee which is the oversight committee for the Arena and Erickson will also call Supervisor Schadewald directly to discuss this further with him.

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Ed Koslowski to receive and place on file. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. **Update re: Honor Rewards Program.**

Cathy Williquette was in attendance and noted that the recent press conference regarding the Honor Rewards program at the Pancake Place went very well. She stated the TV stations did a good job of covering the event, but she was disappointed that there was no press coverage. She noted that several veterans signed up for the program and that when ID cards are requested, they can be requested either with or without a photo. To date, 68 veterans have signed up although 3 were denied because they were not Brown County residents. So far 47 cards have been mailed out and the rest will be going out shortly after information is verified.

Williquette continued that the other exciting part of the Honor Rewards program is that there are 73 businesses signed up to date. She had the vendor change the website a little bit to make the business names a little more prominent than they were before to make it easier to read. Williquette noted she has dropped off advertising materials at the participating businesses and has received very good feedback from them. Erickson suggested that

the business associations who worked to get the word out about the program be contacted again in the fall with an update on the program and to put the word out again for any additional businesses that may wish to sign up. Polus will make a note to contact the business associations in a few months.

Williquette also said one of her employees suggested setting up a table at the Pearly Gates ride on July 9. Duane Pierce gave her contact information so she could ask permission. Pierce noted that last year the Pearly Gates ride have over 500 bikes and a number of hot rods participate so this may be a good way to make contact with some veterans if Pearly Gates will allow it. Erickson also suggested that Williquette contact the area armories to see if they can put information on the program on their websites. Williquette said that she has been hearing from other Register of Deeds who may be interested in starting the program in their counties after hearing of the success that Brown County is having.

Koslowski suggested that the Honor Rewards program also be promoted at the Fair and Polus said that he will have his laptop there to help anyone interested in signing up.

7. Possible Discussion re: 2016 Veterans' Appreciation Day at the Brown County Fair.

a) 25th Anniversary of Desert Storm.

Erickson recalled that at the last meeting the group agreed on the dog tags to be handed out to the Desert Storm veterans. A discussion was held with regard to what the dog tags should say and "Honoring Desert Storm and Desert Shield 25th Anniversary" was agreed upon. Erickson will order 250 dog tags and they should be in here plenty of time for the event.

b) Fair Agenda.

Haskins asked if a speaker has been lined up. He would like to see the speaker be a veteran of Desert Storm/Desert Shield. This was discussed and several suggestions were made. Koslowski said that Amber from the veterans' home in King is a very good and powerful speaker and Polus agreed. He noted he has already extended an invitation to her to have a table in the tent. Polus knows her well and will ask her if she would be interested in speaking.

The rest of the agenda was reviewed and discussed. The distribution of the certificates and dog tags will be done similar to how the certificates and carnations were distributed last year. A question was asked as to who will be handling the table where people can sign up for their veterans certificates and Erickson said that he will work on finding someone to help with that.

Erickson felt it would be a nice gesture to give Laura Nehlson some sort of gift for coming to sing the National Anthem. Haskins said that she is very humble and does not expect anything, but Erickson felt a small gift would be appropriate.

c) Approval of Fair poster.

Polus provided an updated poster with the changes that were discussed previously. The subcommittee agreed that the poster was good and Polus will have them printed at the document center. The posters will be ready for distribution a month prior to the Fair. Every veterans' organization will receive a poster in the mail and the rest will be distributed for posting in various areas including the area reserve centers. Tickets will also be prepared and ready for distribution a month prior to the Fair. Erickson reminded Polus to be sure that the ticket says that it permits admission for the veteran and a guest.

Polus said he will get the letter out to the groups that will be invited to have a table in the tent before the end of the month. Koslowski said the Meet and Greet group has had one meeting and he would like an updated list of organizations and contact information from Polus.

8. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus.

Polus reported that June 25 is Veterans Appreciation Night at the Green Bay Blizzard game. Polus's office will have a table at the game along with several other organizations to provide information for veterans. The game starts at 7:05 pm.

9. **Comments from Carl Soderberg.**

Soderberg was excused; no report.

10. **Report from Committee Members Present (Erickson, Dahlke, Desisles, Haskins, Koslowski, Pierce, Rosinski & Witkowski).**

–Erickson commented on the event taking place at the 9th Street Wellness Center that was discussed at the last meeting. John Hoes asked if anyone from the Subcommittee would be helping out and Erickson advised him that anyone interested would contact him directly. Hoes also wanted to know if the County had any tents available for the event and Erickson advised him to contact the National Guard or the reserve centers.

-Haskins informed that he recently watched the Coca Cola 600 and each car in the race had the name of a fallen veteran on their windshield. Haskins also reported on a soldier from Chicago who went missing on March 28, 1968 in Vietnam. The soldier's remains have been identified by DNA and he will be buried on June 22 at Arlington National Cemetery. Haskins said there are still 1,618 POW/MIAs unaccounted for.

-Koslowski said he would still like Bill Trembl to come to a meeting to speak and Erickson said that was fine. He also talked about the Veterans Day activities and how things will be handled this year without Rosemary Desisles. He said that discussions were held in the past about scaling back the activities since the Honor Rewards program provides year round deals. Witkowski felt that companies could still be solicited for door prizes. Erickson said that the first thing that would need to be done is to get a chairperson. He will check with some of the Board members to see if there is any interest.

-Pierce informed that the Pearly Gates Ride will be held on July 9. The military ceremony will be held at 11:00 am prior to the ride. This year POW/MIAs will be honored and there will also be a number of WW II vets as special guests. There will also be an eight story high hot air balloon with the POW logo on it. The ride will leave at noon and return around 4:30 pm.

-Witkowski said he read in the newspaper that from 5:00 – 8:00 pm on the first Wednesday of every month Brown County residents can visit the Museum free with verification of residency.

Witkowski continued that he attended the Honor Rewards press conference on May 25 and said it seemed so nonchalant that he never wants to attend another press conference. He said that Williquette said the event was really fantastic but he did not think it was fantastic at all. He called the newspaper a few days later to ask where the article in the paper was and he was told that there was no article. Erickson said that the paper was notified but chose not to do anything. Witkowski did not feel it was appropriate for County Executive Troy Streckenbach to make the announcement about the new program when he does not know anything about it. He continued that Streckenbach never even mentioned the Brown County Veterans Recognition Subcommittee. Polus noted that this Committee did not spearhead the Honor Rewards program at all. He said that this was coordinated by himself and Cathy Williquette in conjunction with the County Executive, but nobody on the Subcommittee was asked to go out and solicit participation. Witkowski feels that the advantages of the Honor Rewards program are more for the businesses than the veterans.

11. **Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law.**

Erickson said he went to the National Guard to ask if they would have any military vehicles available for display at the Fair. He will ask for a duce and a Humvee but noted that the armory still has to receive permission to do this.

12. **Adjourn.**

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Duane Pierce to adjourn at 5:33 pm. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio
Recording Secretary